

Albert W. Diotte, Jr Presentation 7-10-08

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Town of Saugus Charter was developed to fit a time and society which was great for a past purpose and not for the current fiscal responsibilities required in the 21st century. All of my recommended changes focus on the idea of accountability. The following are my recommended changes:

1. One important change would be to adopt a Town Administrator instead of the current Town Manager format. The Town Administrator would be responsible for the day to day operations of the town. This person to fit 21st century and beyond needs would have to have a good understanding of how businesses run and how to affectively manage an administration as large as a town. This position would entail a candidate who would hold some degrees in Business and Finance as well as Management.
2. The Board of Selectmen should have more authoritative power with regard to the running of the town. In the current charter the public assumes that the Board of Selectmen has power but in actuality what the Board of Selectmen are allowed to do and the decisions made are extremely limited. The new Board of Selectmen should have the ability to vote on all appointments of position within the Town with regard to fiscal responsibilities, board appointments, and any town position which has authority over monetary budgets. This should be done with the cooperation and assistance of the Town Administrator. Ending with a majority vote from both the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen. Also including any firing of individuals from these same positions.
3. The Town should institute a Personnel Board. This board would be responsible for reviewing all applicants, candidates, and board member positions who are responsible for overseeing any fiscal responsibilities set by the Town Charter. This would include and not limited to: all board members (paid/unpaid) and committee members dealing with monetary budgets. This Board would check the candidates resume and/or qualifications and make recommendations to Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen to vote on. This Board could also be made responsible for the accurate administrating of CORI checks for any and all Town Employees who are required to have one by law.
4. The Town should have a Comptroller or an Internal Auditor put in place. This individual would be responsible to report monthly to the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Finance Committee, School Committee and finally Town Meeting Members on the actual expenditures and income disclosed for each department in the town. This report would be generated monthly and would show how a particular department is either on or off target with their budget. With regard to the School Department budget (which is now overseen by Mr. Weeks, Business Manager) will be reported to the Comptroller any and all actual expenditures and income directly related to the School Department's budget on a monthly basis, as due all other departments. The job of this Comptroller will be to collect all departments monthly reports, to check if departments are on or off budget target. This will give accountability to all departments in regards to their financial status. This person will be responsible for reporting this financial status to both the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, and the Finance Committee members.
5. The Department of Public Works (DPW) makes up a large section of the Town's budget and is an umbrella for many sub-departments contained within, each with their own specific budget. The Superintendent for the DPW should hold at a minimum a Civil Engineer degree with some classes in business administration. The position of Business Manager (like the School Department) should also be instituted to conduct the day to day running of this budget due to the large number of sub-departments contained within the DPW's budget. The requiring of the

Superintendent to have a engineering degree is due to the large expenditure of money the Town currently has expended to hire engineers from outside firms. This could be a savings due to the Town having an engineer on staff in-house and using the assistance of interns to oversee Town projects.

Conclusion - I feel that the Town Charter is not a blown engine - but just needs a good tune-up so the Town can continue in the 21st century as a successful and thriving community.